



DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

INFORMATION SERVICE

OFFICE OF COORDINATOR OF FISHERIES

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The pack of salmon in Alaska during the 1945 season, for which the industry is already preparing, is expected to fall below normal production by about 15 per cent but should be somewhat larger than last year, Dr. Ira N. Gabrielson, Deputy Coordinator of Fisheries, announced today.

A pack of about five million cases is predicted, compared with last year's production of 4,856,000 cases -- the smallest in many years. Average yield of the Alaska salmon fishery, which is the Territory's most important industry, is about 5,849,000 cases.

The prediction is based on reports furnished by biologists of the Fish and Wildlife Service as to the condition of the stocks of salmon, and on information on economic conditions, including available supplies of manpower and shipping for the industry.

While below-average packs of all species are anticipated in 1945, the most serious decline will be in red salmon. Only about two-thirds of the normal pack of this choice species is expected.

In southeastern Alaska, estimated production of salmon in 1945 will be about two and a quarter million cases, a substantial gain over last year but less than the 10-year average, according to the Coordinator's office. Runs of pink salmon, the most abundant species in southeastern Alaska, are expected to approach normal size in 1945, after two seasons of abnormally low production. The yield of other species in the southern area, however, will probably fall below average.

A nearly normal production of more than two million cases is predicted for Central Alaska, although other species are counted on to make up the expected deficit of about 20 percent in the pack of red salmon.

In Western Alaska, where 90 percent of the pack normally consists of red salmon, the effect of the small runs of this species will be felt most sharply. In this area the Coordinator's office predicts a pack of about 600,000 cases -- a decline of 42 percent compared with 1944.

In Bristol Bay, which includes the principal salmon fishing areas of Western Alaska, the runs of red salmon are abnormally small in all years divisible by five. Although these reduced runs have occurred every fifth year for at least the past twenty years, the reason for the decline in this particular stock is not well understood.

As in 1943 and 1944, the Alaska salmon industry, which begins its operations during June, will function under a concentration plan administered by the Office of the Coordinator of Fisheries. The plan is a wartime measure adopted to make the most efficient use of available supplies of manpower, equipment, and shipping. The 1945 concentration plan will differ only in minor details from the procedure followed in the previous years of its operation.